

Message Text

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT OP-ED BY JAMES RESTON WEDNESDAY AUG
24 NEW YORK TIMES HEADED "CARTER, PANAMA AND CHINA."

2. IT IS CLEAR FROM PRESIDENT CARTER'S LATEST PRESS CON-
FERENCE THAT HE STILL DOESN'T GET THE POINT OF SO MANY
PEOPLE WHO WISH HIM WELL BUT STILL CRITICIZE SOME OF HIS
RECENT ACTIONS.

3. THE EMERGING ISSUE IS NOT ABOUT HIS MOTIVES OR HIS
ETHICS, WHICH ARE NOT IN DISPUTE, BUT ABOUT HIS JUDGMENT--
SPECIFICALLY ABOUT HIS HANDLING OF THE LANCE CASE, AND MORE
IMPORTANT, ABOUT HIS TACTICS AND TIMING IN DEALING WITH
THE SOVIET UNION, CHINA, ISRAEL, PANAMA AND CUBA.

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4. LANCE IS IMPORTANT ONLY AS A SYMBOL, BUT SINCE JIMMY
CARTER ROSE TO THE WHITE HOUSE ON SYMBOLS OF THE NEW OR OLD
MORALITY, IT IS A LITTLE AWKWARD FOR HIM TO ARGUE NOW THAT
LANCE DID NOTHING ILLEGAL OR UNETHICAL ACCORDING TO THE
RULES OF BANKERS AT THAT TIME. MAYBE, MR. CARTER SUGGEST-
ED, THE SYSTEM OF BANKING SHOULD BE EXAMINED AND CORRECTED,

BUT THIS IS QUITE A SWITCH. "THE WAY TO STOP FINANCIAL JOY-RIDING," SAID WOODROW WILSON, "IS TO ARREST THE CHAUFFEUR AND NOT THE AUTOMOBILE." AND FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT, WHO WAS NO SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER, INSISTED ON DRIVING THE MONEY CHANGERS FROM THE TEMPLE (MATTHEW 21-12) INSTEAD OF PUTTING THEM IN.

5. HIS JUDGMENT ON OTHER MATTERS IS MORE SERIOUS. HE HAS DRAMATIZED THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION WITH THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH IS FAIR ENOUGH, BUT IGNORED IT IN THE PHILIPPINES, PANAMA AND SOUTH KOREA, WHERE UNITED STATES STRATEGIC INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED. AND IN THE PROCESS, HE HAS CONFUSED OUR MAJOR ALLIES IN JAPAN AND EUROPE.

6. THERE IS SOMETHING VERY PRAGMATIC IN ALL THIS--WHAT GEORGE BERNARD SHAW CALLED REALISM "IN THE BINDING OF OUR HYMN BOOK"--BUT HE COULD BE GETTING INTO TROUBLE, BECAUSE HE IS DOING THE ONE THING HE PROMISED HE WOULDN'T DO--LET- TING HIS POLITICS GET IN THE WAY OF HIS PRINCIPLES.

7. MR. CARTER IS OPPOSED TO THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE TO ACHIEVE POLITICAL OBJECTIVES, BUT IS TRYING TO RESTORE DIP- LOMATIC RELATIONS WITH FIDEL CASTRO, WHO IS USING MILITARY FORCE IN AFRICA TO INSTALL COMMUNIST REGIMES IN THAT CONTI- NENT AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

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8. HE HAS PROPOSED A PEACE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST THAT IS OPPOSED BY BOTH THE ISRAELIS AND THE ARABS, AND HE HAS SENT SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE TO PEKING PRECISELY AT THE POINT WHEN EVEN HIS OWN AIDES IN THE CABINET AGREE THERE IS NO CHANCE OF AGREEMENT ON THE MAIN PROBLEM OF TAIWAN.

9. THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF CHINA AND THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OBVIOUSLY HAVE A LOT OF COMMON PROBLEMS TO DISCUSS, BEGINNING WITH THE FUTURE OF TAIWAN, BUT WHY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION AGREED TO TAKE UP THE TAIWAN QUESTION IN PEKING JUST WHEN IT IS STARTING A CRITICAL BATTLE OVER THE FUTURE OF THE PANAMA CANAL IS NOT QUITE CLEAR.

10. THE TWO SUBJECTS MAY SEEM FAR APART, BUT NOT IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE. FOR THE SENATORS WHO OPPOSE "GIVING UP" THE CANAL ALSO OPPOSE "GETTING OUT" OF TAIWAN, AND EVEN RAISING THE TAIWAN QUESTION AT THIS TIME RISKS ADDING TO THE OPPOSITION TO THE CANAL TREATY.

11. FOR EXAMPLE, PRESIDENT CARTER CAN BE GRATEFUL THAT

THE OPPOSITION TO HIS COMPROMISE PANAMA TREATY IS NOW BEING LED BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND OF SOUTH CAROLINA AND SENATOR JESSE HELMS OF NORTH CAROLINA. WITH THESE TWO JINGOISTIC SHOUTERS LEADING THE CHARGE AGAINST HIM, NO MATTER WHAT THE POPULARITY POLLS SAY, PRESIDENT CARTER CAN HARDLY LOSE THE PANAMA TREATY IN THE END.

12. BUT TAIWAN IS SOMETHING ELSE. THE SENATORS WHO ARE AGAINST THE PANAMA TREATY MAY ALSO BE AGAINST ENDING THE UNITED STATES SECURITY TREATY WITH TAIWAN, BUT IT DOESN'T WORK THE OTHER WAY. FOR EXAMPLE, SENATOR BARRY GOLDWATER IS GOING ALONG WITH THE PANAMA TREATY, BUT WOULD STUMP THE COUNTRY TO PRESERVE THE TAIWAN TREATY, AND HE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY CARRY THE VOTES OF QUITE A FEW SENATORS WITH HIM, UNCLASSIFIED

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PROBABLY INCLUDING HOWARD BAKER OF TENNESSEE, THE REPUBLICAN LEADER IN THE SENATE.

13. THE ISSUES BEING RAISED HERE ARE NOT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES BUT OF ITS TIMING, TACTICS, AND POLITICAL JUDGMENT. IT HAS COMMITTED ITSELF ON PANAMA AND FACES AN URGENT TEST OF ITS AUTHORITY BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD ON THAT ISSUE.

14. BUT THERE WAS NOTHING URGENT ABOUT UNITED STATES-CHINA RELATIONS THAT REQUIRE SECRETARY VANCE'S TRIP TO PEKING AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME. HE KNEW LONG AGO THAT CHINA'S CONDITION FOR "NORMALIZATION" OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH WASHINGTON--BREAKING THE SECURITY TREATY WITH TAIWAN AND WITHDRAWING UNITED STATES TROOPS FROM THAT ISLAND, NOW ONLY 1,400--WERE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE CONGRESS AND A THREAT TO THE PANAMA TREATY.

15. IN SHORT, IT RAISES AGAIN THE QUESTION OF JUDGMENT. IT WAS THE WRONG MISSION, ON THE WRONG SUBJECT AT THE WRONG TIME, AND EVERYBODY IN WASHINGTON KNEW IT. IN FACT THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT WARNED ALL REPORTERS AHEAD OF TIME NOT TO EXPECT ANY PROGRESS, BUT THEY WENT AHEAD WITH THE VANCE MISSION ANYWAY.

16. AND THE PARADOX OF ALL THIS IS THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES WITH MOSCOW, PEKING, JERUSALEM, PANAMA AND HAVANA MAY BE RIGHT, BUT THEIR TACTICS, AS WITH BERT LANCE, ARE VERY ODD. CHRISTOPHER

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